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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

December 8, 2006

Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder Raises Awareness for Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment

Plans to Distribute 8,000 Education Kits across State

Kansas City, MO—Missouri Lieutenant Governor Peter Kinder was in Kansas City today to begin distribution of 8,000 educational packets and beading kits regarding a nearly preventable cancer which affects women. Today's event at the American Cancer Society Kansas City Corporate office was the first step in circulating thousands of packets to educate Missourians on cervical cancer.

"The National Lieutenant Governors Association (NLGA) is working to 'End Cervical Cancer in our Lifetime'," said Lt. Governor Kinder. "The American Cancer Society shows the U.S. death rate from cervical cancer down over the past few years, but the rate of invasive cervical cancer is up."

According to the American Cancer Society, 9,700 American women are expected to have developed cervical cancer this year, and about 3,700 will die from it. "Given these statistics and the fact that cervical cancer is almost preventable, I am proud to be part of this campaign," said Kinder.

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According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a virus called human papillomavirus (HPV) causes 99.7% of all cervical cancer cases. Most sexually active adults will be infected with HPV at some point in their life. There are many types of HPV spread by skin to skin contact in the genital area. HPV causes no symptoms and usually goes away on its own. However, high-risk HPV which stays in the body a period of years can cause cervical cancer. The HPV causes cells to change leading to cancer. Cervical cancer can be prevented or cured by removing the abnormal cells before they become cancerous. A Pap test can detect the abnormal cells. Often, there are no early symptoms, so the National Women's Health Resource Center advises women to have pap tests done regularly.

"By helping people make the connection between the virus and the cancer, there is a real opportunity to end cervical cancer," said Kinder.

Lt. Governor Kinder will pass out 8,000 educational brochures and bead kits directly to interested Missourians. In addition, he is requesting press outlets to run stories on the preventable nature of this cancer.

The facts as outlined in the NLGA educational kit are as follows: The surest prevention of HPV infection is abstinence. If one becomes sexually active, limiting the number of sexual partners decreases the chance of infection. Use of condoms can reduce, but will not eliminate, the chance of HPV infection.

Medical experts urge women to commit to a Pap test regularly. "Low-cost and free Pap tests are available," said Kinder. "Missourians can call the 'Show Me Healthy Women' program at (573) 522-2845 to reach this state's effort to provide breast and cervical cancer screenings for low-income, uninsured, and underserved women. These free screenings are a vital tool in helping women to feel good about themselves and their health."

More cervical cancer information is available at www.maketheconnection.org, www.cancer.org, www.nlga.us, and www.dhss.mo.gov/BreastCervCancer.